

YAB FYI



South Carolina Center for Safe Schools

Volume 1, Issue 1

Youth Advisory Board Newsletter

Spring 2004

Youth Leadership Retreat - Camp St. Christopher

Sixteen members of the statewide Youth Advisory Board (YAB) met for their annual retreat at Camp St. Christopher on Seabrook Island from January 9 through 11th. The teen leaders hail from all over the state and each brings a unique perspective on how to improve our state's schools.

While the scenery at the retreat center is beautiful, YAB members had little time to enjoy it. Each day of the retreat was packed with leadership training and conducting YAB business. The board made important decisions that will guide their work for the coming year including a group service project for the Children's Garden, a child development center for homeless children



SCCSS 2003-04 Youth Advisory Board

in Columbia. YAB members will also perform service projects tailored to their individual schools under the theme, "Making Schools Healthy and Safe."

"I am really pleased with the leadership qualities displayed by the youth serving on our board," said Dr. Susan Alexander, Director of the SC Center for Safe Schools. "They have a wealth of information to share with us about how we can improve health and safety in our schools."

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YAB Members Work on Service Projects

As one of their objectives for the 2003-04 school year, each member of the SCCSS Youth Advisory Board will organize and perform individual community service projects tailored to their individual schools under the theme, "Making Schools Healthy and Safe." The following are descriptions of individual projects in progress.

Khalid Barr is constructing a web page that endorses and facilitates youth involvement and access to community service projects and leadership organizations. Khalid attends A.C. Flora High School in Richland School District One.

Tangela Brown is getting students at her school involved in a Kick Butts Day Carnival and 5K run to focus the community on smoking cessation and prevention. Tangie attends Elloree High School in Orangeburg School District Three.

Shauna Buczkowski has formed a committee at her school to develop strategies for youth smoking cessation and prevention. Shauna attends Airport High School in Lexington School District Two.

Emily Gould is working to raise student awareness of the dangers of tobacco use and influence them to join the anti-smoking organization, Rage Against the Haze. Emily attends Greenville Senior High School, Greenville County School District.

The South Carolina Center for Safe Schools Youth Advisory Board is comprised of 18 middle and high school students statewide.

The purpose of the Youth Advisory Board is to serve as a resource for policy/program development relating to youth safety in the state of South Carolina.

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Community Service Project: Children's Garden



On March 6, 2004, program director Harriet Atkinson led the Youth Advisory Board through the brightly colored halls and rooms of the Children's Garden. The facility is tucked away in College Place United Methodist Church on the campus of Columbia College. Since its opening in 1990, the Children's Garden has provided care for

over 2000 children and their families. The tour began in the lobby where Ms. Atkinson told the history behind the facility. She covered their main sources of income, such as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act grant, and community donations. The Children's Garden employs administrators and teachers, along with the help of many volunteers. The Children's Garden mission statement is a perfect description of our experience there. To offer a setting for kids that provides physiological and emotional stability for those in need.



Collecting the items for the Children's Garden was an easy task for some of the board members. Blake Nixon donated a truckload of items that people from his town donated. He got the message out about this service project through a local TV station, newspaper, and fliers he posted around town and school. Kyle Macgargle publicized through a school announcement. Khalid Barr got clubs at school he is affiliated with to donate items. Tangela Brown got the faculty staff at her school involved and her parents and friends brought items to donate. The collected items from their wish list:

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|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| • Paper towels | • Tooth brushes |
| • Paper/plastic cups | • Wagons |
| • Clorox | • Teddy bears |
| • Diapers | • Toys |
| • Brooms | • Gift cards |
| • Wipes | • Trash bags |
| • Non-perishable food items | • Kleenex |

The Children's Garden had a tremendous impact on us. It has taught us several lessons. We need to help others in need. People need to continue to give donations to assist in the survival of the families. Children's Garden needs more advertisement to show people that other's need love. More organizations are needed more like this one. Families are inspired to change and this provides the children with a sense of love and comfort. Organizations like Children's Garden are wonderful for the community.



Service Projects, cont.

Courtney Knowling is advocating for the hiring of traffic control monitors to deal with serious safety issues at her high school and the local elementary and middle schools. Courtney attends Andrews High School in the Georgetown County School District.

Laquanda Leaven conducted a successful blood drive at her high school in February 2004. Laquanda attends Marlboro County High School, Marlboro County School District.

Kyle Macgargle is coordinating efforts to clean up litter at his school and the surrounding neighborhood. Kyle attends Irmo High School in Lexington/Richland School District Five.

Jasmine McCrory conducted a survey of students in her school, which identified the following key areas of concern: drug and tobacco use; poor food choices on campus; and overcrowded parking conditions. Jasmine, who attends Lancaster High School in the Lancaster School District, is working with students, teachers, and administrators to find solutions to these issues.

Molly McGinnis works with a group that is using data from youth safety surveys to award mini-grants to outstanding service clubs that are making a difference in the community. Molly attends Spring Valley High School in Richland School District Two.

Casey Melton is working with the Teacher Cadet Program and Communities in Schools to develop a mentoring program in the Lancaster County School District. Casey attends Lancaster High School.

Sarah Nader, who also attends Lancaster High School, has formed a group of students who will perform a new service project in the school every month.

Tessa Monahan is collaborating with a number of students and various clubs to collect, sort, and deliver food at the Harvest Hope Food Bank in Columbia. Tessa attends Cardinal Newman High School.

Blake Nixon is working to make improvements in the security systems in use at his school, Southwood Middle in Anderson School District Five.